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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/709,534	05/12/2004	Bradley P. Jones	FIS920040035US1	3533
29371	7590	03/15/2006	EXAMINER	
CANTOR COLBURN LLP - IBM FISHKILL 55 GRIFFIN ROAD SOUTH BLOOMFIELD, CT 06002			COLEMAN, WILLIAM D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2823	
DATE MAILED: 03/15/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/709,534	JONES ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	W. David Coleman	2823	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 6, 7, 10 and 11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 8 and 9 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)             | 4) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)          |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Response to Amendment*

1. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

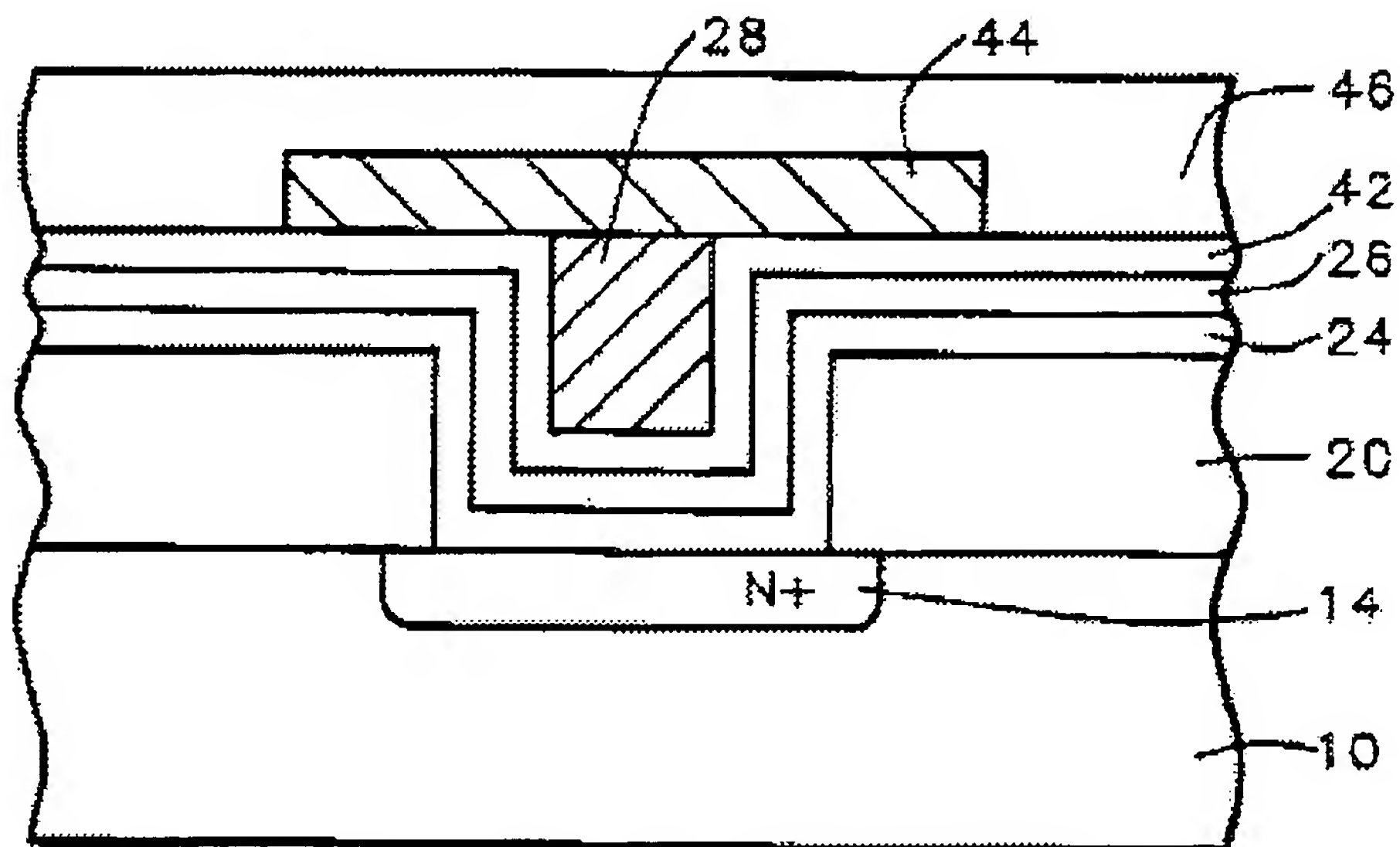
### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Chang et al., U.S. Patent 5,672,543
4. Chang discloses a semiconductor process as claimed. Please see FIGS. 1-9, where Chang discloses the following limitations.



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5. Pertaining to claim 1, Chang teaches a method for reducing voiding between a first layer and a second layer formed over said first layer during a semiconductor annealing process, the method comprising:

forming a counter tensile layer **42** over said second layer **26** (see column 3, lines 20-53, where Chang teaches reducing voids and compressive stress), said second layer **26** comprising a titanium nitride cap layer, wherein said counter tensile layer is selected from a material such that an opposing directional stress is created between said first layer and said second layer (i.e., prevents peeling).

6. Pertaining to claim 2, Chang teaches the method of claim 1, wherein said counter tensile layer is selected to be the same material as said first layer (i.e., titanium).

7. Pertaining to claim 3, Chang teaches the method of claim 2, wherein said first layer and said counter tensile layer comprise a refractory metal (it is well known that titanium is a refractory metal).

8. Pertaining to claim 6, Chang teaches a method for forming a metal silicide contact for a semiconductor device, the method comprising:

forming a refractory metal layer over a substrate **24**, including active and non-active area of said substrate (this limitation is met because the layers are deposited conformally);

forming a cap layer **26** over said refractory metal layer **24**; and

forming a counter tensile layer **42** over said cap layer, wherein said counter tensile layer is selected from a material such that an opposing directional stress is created between said counter tensile layer and said cap layer, with respect to a directional stress created between said refractory metal layer and said cap layer.

9. Pertaining to claim 7, Chang teaches the method of claim 6, wherein said counter tensile layer is selected to be the same material as said refractory layer.

10. Pertaining to claim 12, Chang teaches the method of claim 6, further comprising annealing the substrate so as to cause portions of said refractory metal layer to react with active areas of said substrate.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang et al., U.S. Patent 5,672,543.

13. Chang discloses a semiconductor process substantially as claimed. However pertaining to claims 10 and 11, Chang fails to disclose the thicknesses of the materials as claimed. Given the teaching of the references, it would have been obvious to determine the optimum thickness,

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temperature as well as condition of delivery of the layers involved. See *In re Aller, Lacey and Hall* (10 USPQ 233-237) "It is not inventive to discover optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation. Note that the specification contains no disclosure of either the critical nature of the claimed ranges or any unexpected results arising therefrom. Where patentability is said to be based upon particular chosen dimensions or upon another variable recited in a claim, the Applicant must show that the chosen dimensions are critical. *In re Woodruff*, 919 f.2d 1575, 1578, 16 USPQ2d 1934, 1936 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

Any differences in the claimed invention and the prior art may be expected to result in some differences in properties. The issue is whether the properties differ to such an extent that the difference is really unexpected. *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986)

Appellants have the burden of explaining the data in any declaration they proffer as evidence of non-obviousness. *Ex parte Ishizaka*, 24 USPQ2d 1621, 1624 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1992).

An Affidavit or declaration under 37 CFR 1.132 must compare the claimed subject matter with the closest prior art to be effective to rebut a prima facie case of obviousness. *In re Burckel*, 592 F.2d 1175, 201 USPQ 67 (CCPA 1979).

### ***Objections***

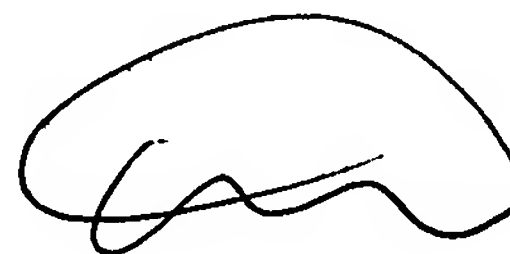
14. Claims 4, 8 and 9 objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

*Conclusion*

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to W. David Coleman whose telephone number is 571-272-1856. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM.

16. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matt Smith can be reached on 571-272-1907. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

17. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



W. David Coleman  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 2823

WDC